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09/925,833	08/07/2001	Hiroyasu Kurashina	81752.0110	3909

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EXAMINER	
QIN, YIXING	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2622	

DATE MAILED: 01/27/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Advisory Action Before the Filing of an Appeal Brief	**Application No.** 09/925,833	**Applicant(s)** KURASHINA, HIROYASU	
	Examiner Yixing Qin	**Art Unit** 2622	

--The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

THE REPLY FILED 29 December 2005 FAILS TO PLACE THIS APPLICATION IN CONDITION FOR ALLOWANCE.

1. ☒ The reply was filed after a final rejection, but prior to or on the same day as filing a Notice of Appeal. To avoid abandonment of this application, applicant must timely file one of the following replies: (1) an amendment, affidavit, or other evidence, which places the application in condition for allowance; (2) a Notice of Appeal (with appeal fee) in compliance with 37 CFR 41.31; or (3) a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) in compliance with 37 CFR 1.114. The reply must be filed within one of the following time periods:
   a) ☐ The period for reply expires _____ months from the mailing date of the final rejection.
   b) ☒ The period for reply expires on: (1) the mailing date of this Advisory Action, or (2) the date set forth in the final rejection, whichever is later. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of the final rejection.

   Examiner Note: If box 1 is checked, check either box (a) or (b). ONLY CHECK BOX (b) WHEN THE FIRST REPLY WAS FILED WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF THE FINAL REJECTION. See MPEP 706.07(f).

Extensions of time may be obtained under 37 CFR 1.136(a). The date on which the petition under 37 CFR 1.136(a) and the appropriate extension fee have been filed is the date for purposes of determining the period of extension and the corresponding amount of the fee. The appropriate extension fee under 37 CFR 1.17(a) is calculated from: (1) the expiration date of the shortened statutory period for reply originally set in the final Office action; or (2) as set forth in (b) above, if checked. Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of the final rejection, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

NOTICE OF APPEAL

2. ☐ The Notice of Appeal was filed on _____. A brief in compliance with 37 CFR 41.37 must be filed within two months of the date of filing the Notice of Appeal (37 CFR 41.37(a)), or any extension thereof (37 CFR 41.37(e)), to avoid dismissal of the appeal. Since a Notice of Appeal has been filed, any reply must be filed within the time period set forth in 37 CFR 41.37(a).

AMENDMENTS

3. ☐ The proposed amendment(s) filed after a final rejection, but prior to the date of filing a brief, will not be entered because
   (a) ☐ They raise new issues that would require further consideration and/or search (see NOTE below);
   (b) ☐ They raise the issue of new matter (see NOTE below);
   (c) ☐ They are not deemed to place the application in better form for appeal by materially reducing or simplifying the issues for appeal; and/or
   (d) ☐ They present additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims.

   NOTE: _____. (See 37 CFR 1.116 and 41.33(a)).
4. ☐ The amendments are not in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121. See attached Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment (PTOL-324).
5. ☐ Applicant's reply has overcome the following rejection(s): _____.
6. ☐ Newly proposed or amended claim(s) _____ would be allowable if submitted in a separate, timely filed amendment canceling the non-allowable claim(s).
7. ☐ For purposes of appeal, the proposed amendment(s): a) ☐ will not be entered, or b) ☐ will be entered and an explanation of how the new or amended claims would be rejected is provided below or appended.

   The status of the claim(s) is (or will be) as follows:
   Claim(s) allowed: _____.
   Claim(s) objected to: _____.
   Claim(s) rejected: _____.
   Claim(s) withdrawn from consideration: _____.

AFFIDAVIT OR OTHER EVIDENCE

8. ☐ The affidavit or other evidence filed after a final action, but before or on the date of filing a Notice of Appeal will not be entered because applicant failed to provide a showing of good and sufficient reasons why the affidavit or other evidence is necessary and was not earlier presented. See 37 CFR 1.116(e).
9. ☐ The affidavit or other evidence filed after the date of filing a Notice of Appeal, but prior to the date of filing a brief, will not be entered because the affidavit or other evidence failed to overcome all rejections under appeal and/or appellant fails to provide a showing a good and sufficient reasons why it is necessary and was not earlier presented. See 37 CFR 41.33(d)(1).
10. ☐ The affidavit or other evidence is entered. An explanation of the status of the claims after entry is below or attached.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION/OTHER

11. ☒ The request for reconsideration has been considered but does NOT place the application in condition for allowance because: Please see attached Office Action.
12. ☐ Note the attached Information Disclosure Statement(s). (PTO/SB/08 or PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____
13. ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

In response to applicant's amendment received 12/29/05, all requested changes have been entered.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 12/29/05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The argument is that the Hidaka and Hayama references do not disclose the last limitation of the claim 1, which also appears in the other independent claims. As previously mentioned, Hidaka discloses in column1, lines 14-20 (especially line 17) that the conventional way to print a label is to organize it into a block-by-block form. One can see from various figures in Hayama (e.g. 2A-D, 3A-C, 7, 12A-14C) and Hidaka (e.g. 8-13) that the information is arranged in lines of blocks. The arrangement of the blocks into k lines of m blocks, as being claimed, is an obvious variation of the way data is to be organized based upon the figures disclosed in the references above. Even though the references do not explicitly say that these arrangements are printed in a block-by-block basis, one of ordinary skill in the art can easily make the connection that the data organized in a block-by-block basis can be printed in that manner. The Examiner would also like to note that these figures are similar to Figs. 21-30 of the applicant's drawings.

It is also apparent from at least Fig. 11 of Hayama that different sized labels can be printed using the same label machine. One can see that there are different size labels, namely large and medium. Hayama further notes varying tape sizes can be used in the address label printer in column 4, lines 62-67, which means that data

arrange in a block-by-block basis can be printed on a second tape width smaller than a first tape width. The rejection is maintained.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

I. Claims 1, 5-13, and 17-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hidaka et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,677,999 – "Hidaka") and in view of Hayama (U.S. Patent No. 6,115,024).

1. Claims 1, 12, 13, and 24

An address printing method for a tape printing apparatus, comprising the steps of:

- **mounting a tape to be printed;**
- Hidaka discloses in column 3, lines 58-59 that a label driver drives a label tape.
- **detecting a tape width of the mounted tape;**
- Hidaka discloses this in Fig. 6 item 101.
- **registering information of n items (n is an integer equal to or larger than 2) which are components of an address of a mail article, as address information;**
- Hidaka discloses this in Fig. 7 a variety of formats that can be printed, including address information such as zip code, address and name.
- **instructing address printing;**
- Hidaka discloses this in Fig. 10 the selection of a usage and the ability to print. One can obviously select an address label to print.
- **arranging, in response to the instruction of the address printing, item images representative of information of the n respective items based on the address information as respective lines of a single block, and printing the single block, if the detected tape width is a first tape width; and**

- Hidaka discloses this in Figs 2A-D and 3A-C that various information can be printed on a particular sized tape. Also note Fig. 12A-D, where the same information is printed even if tape sizes are different. This makes it obvious to print the information in a single block since there are no changes needed.
- **grouping, in response to the instruction of the address printing, the item images representative of information of the n respective items into m blocks (m is an integer defined as $2 \leq m \leq n$) based on the address information, arranging the grouped item images as respective lines of k blocks (k is an integer defined as $1 \leq k \leq m$) of the m blocks, and printing the k blocks on a block-by-block basis, if the detected tape width is a second tape width smaller than the first tape width.**
- Hidaka teaches the printing of items block by block in column 1, line 17. The Hidaka reference, however, does not teach the printing of information block-by-blocks if the tape width is smaller than a first tape width. The secondary reference, Hayama; discloses in Fig. 11 that various sized address labels can be printed. One can see that smaller-sized labels has less information than a larger sized label and the information is arranged in various blocks (i.e. m blocks) in different number of lines (i.e. lines of k blocks). As mentioned above in the response to the arguments, Figs. 8 and 9 of Hayama show different examples of print image data that is displayed to be printed and one can see that they are divided into lines of blocks. These examples are based upon the types of address labels as seen in Fig. 11. One can also see in Fig. 7, items T10 and T11 and column 10, lines 17-27 that large and medium-sized are two types of address labels that can be printed.
- As mentioned above in the arguments, one can see from various figures in Hayama (e.g. 2A-D, 3A-C, 7, 12A-14C) and Hidaka (e.g. 8-13) that the information is arranged in lines of blocks. The arrangement of the blocks into k lines of m blocks is an obvious variation of the way data is to be organized based upon the figures disclosed in the references above and the printing of these arrangements in a block-by-block basis is obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. The Examiner would also like to note that these figures are similar to Figs. 21-30 of the applicant's drawings. Hayama further notes varying tape sizes can be used in the address label printer in column 4, lines 62-67.
- Claims 12 and 24 further claims the cutting off of the tape after the printing. This limitation is obvious, if not inherent, feature if the printed label is to be applied to, for example, an envelope. The printed address label has to be removed so that it can be used.
- Both references are in the art of label printing. Therefore, it would be obvious from Hayama that the information of a smaller tape width could be printed in block-by-block basis. The motivation would be that smaller labels may contain less information and the printing of blocks enables the appropriate information gets printed at the appropriate location on the tape.

5. Claims 5 and 17

An address printing method according to claim 1, further

- **including the step of storing a block-by-block print items table which defines items corresponding to respective lines of each block to be printed in response to the instruction of the address printing.**
- Hidaka discloses a table in Fig. 7 and Hayama discloses a table in Fig. 11

6. Claims 6 and 18

An address printing method according to claim 5, wherein

- **the step of storing the block-by-block print items table includes storing an item image print size defining a print size of each item image in a direction of a width of the tape, which item image corresponds to each line of each block to be printed.**
- One can see from both tables that sizes are listed.

7. Claims 7 and 19

An address printing method according to claim 5, wherein

- **the second tape width includes a plurality of tape widths defined in advance, wherein the block-by-block print items table defines the items corresponding to respective lines of each block to be printed, for each of the plurality of tape widths.**
- One can see from the table in Hidaka that various set sizes are disclosed. Also see Fig. 12 of Hidaka.

8. Claims 8 and 20

An address printing method according to claim 1, further

- **including the step of notifying a user, in response to the instruction of the address printing, that the detected tape width is neither the first tape width nor the second tape width if the detected tape width is neither the first tape width nor the second tape width.**
- Hidaka discloses in Fig. 9, step T2 and T3 that a message is displayed when the tape size is too small.

9. Claims 9 and 21

An address printing method according to claim 1, wherein

- **the step of grouping the item images and printing the k blocks on a block-by-block basis when the detected tape width is the second tape width includes the step of designating the k blocks of the m blocks as blocks to be printed.**
- One can see from Fig. 11 of Hayama that the various items are grouped together in blocks. Column 11, lines 30-45 discloses and example of printing a large-sized address label. One would understand that printing a smaller sized label (i.e. second tape width) would be printed in a similar fashion, except with less items because of the smaller area in which to print information.

10. Claims 10 and 22

An address printing method according to claim 1, further

- **including the step of notifying a user of a block which is being printed in response to the instruction of the address printing.**
- Again, Hidaka discloses a message notification in T3 of Fig. 9 for insufficient tape width. It would be a simply matter of design to have notifications for other items such as the current block which is printing.

11. Claims 11 and 23

An address printing method according to claim 1, further

- **including the step of being capable of giving an instruction for canceling the instruction of the address printing, thereby stopping a subsequent printing operation.**
- Hidaka only discloses in T6 of Fig. 9 whether to print or not. However, the canceling of a print job is common and well-known and would be a simple feature for one of ordinary skill in the art to implement.

II. Claim 2-4 and 14-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hidaka et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,677,999 – "Hidaka") and in view of Hayama (U.S. Patent No. 6,115,024) and further in view of Kara (U.S. Patent No. 5,510,992)

2. Claims 2 and 14

An address printing method according to claim 1, further including the steps of:

- **selecting whether or not a barcode image representative of a customer barcode should be included in the item images representative of information of the n respective items, the customer barcode being formed based on a seven-digit postal code indicating a postal administrative district/town area and an address indication number representative of a subordinate address portion further specific than the postal administrative district/town area; and generating, in response to the instruction of the address printing, the barcode image if it is selected that the barcode image should be included.**
- Neither Hidaka nor Hayama discloses the use of a barcode for the address. The tertiary reference, Kara, discloses in Fig. 5 (item 513) the selection of whether a barcode is printed. Column 8, lines 15-19 of Kara discloses that the barcode is created from a ZIP + 4 format (i.e. 12345-6789). The 5 number ZIP indicates an area in the country and the + 4 further narrows this area to a more precise location. The zip code is not 7-digits, but it would be obvious and easy to change the amount of digits to conform to some other postal code standard.

- Claim 14 is related to an address printing device. Although the selection means of Kara is in a computer, it would be a matter of design to integrate the selection means into a printing device, such as that one of Hayama.
- All three references are in the art of making label. Therefore, it would be obvious from to include a barcode selection mechanism. The motivation would be to enable users to print barcodes, which can be read by machines. The reading by machines is faster than using the human eye and can more quickly identify pertinent address information.

3. Claims 3 and 15

An address printing method according to claim 2, wherein barcode numerical value information which is indicative of a numerical value to be represented by a customer barcode can be registered as a portion of the address information, and

- **wherein the step of selecting whether or not a barcode image should be included, includes the steps of:**
- **determining, in response to the instruction of the address printing, whether or not the barcode numerical value information has been registered; and**
- **selecting that the barcode image should be included when it is determined that the barcode numerical value information has been registered, and**
- Kara shows on Fig. 2A at the top, that a serial/zip number is displayed (i.e. registered). Although it is not explicitly stated by any of the references that there is a check to see whether a zip code (or any other information) is registered before printing, the above limitations of determination of whether a zip code is registered would simply be a matter of design.
- Kara shows the checking for whether a correct TMU was used in Fig. 5 step 504/504, which indicates that additional checks can simply be made for the presence of other items such as the zip code.
- Hidaka also discloses in Fig. 9, items T8, T9 and T11 that a check can be made after a print command has been issued.
- **wherein the step of generating the barcode image includes generating the barcode image based on the barcode numerical value information.**
- Column 8, lines 15-19 of Kara discloses that the barcode is created from a ZIP + 4 format (i.e. 12345-6789).

4. Claims 4 and 16

An address printing method according to claim 3, wherein

- **the barcode numerical value information is registered in a state decomposed into information of the seven-digit postal code and information of the address indication number.**
- One can see from Fig. 2A of Kara that the zip code is separated into two sections by a dash.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Yixing Qin whose telephone number is (571)272-7381. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:30-6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Edward Coles can be reached on (571)272-7402. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

YQ